



# Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner  
Terry Holliday



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## Student Suspensions and Expulsions

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan held a news conference this past week to highlight civil rights issues related to student suspensions and expulsions. Duncan released new data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights that reveal unfortunate truths about our nation's schools. You can see a summary of his presentation [here](#).

In a *New York Times* [article](#), reporter Tamar Lewin highlighted some of the data.

## Black Students Face More Discipline, Data Suggests

By [TAMAR LEWIN](#)

Published: March 6, 2012

Although black students made up only 18 percent of those enrolled in the schools sampled, they accounted for 35 percent of those suspended once, 46 percent of those suspended more than once and 39 percent of all expulsions, according to the Civil Rights Data Collection's 2009-10 statistics from 72,000 schools in 7,000 districts, serving about 85 percent of the nation's students. The data covered students from kindergarten age through high school.

One in five black boys and more than one in 10 black girls received an out-of-school suspension. Over all, black students were three and a half times as likely to be suspended or expelled than their white peers.

And in districts that reported expulsions under zero-tolerance policies, Hispanic and black students represent 45 percent of the student body, but 56 percent of those expelled under such policies.

I would encourage readers to visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web page <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/> to find data for your local schools and districts. State comparison data are also available.

We have been working for over a year with several partners to address these issues in Kentucky. The Kentucky Center for School Safety has developed annual data [reports](#) that provide information about student disciplinary actions, including data broken out by race/ethnicity.

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